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Item 7 (i) of the provisional agenda*
Coordination, programme and other questions: calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields

Letter dated 24 June 2005 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences to the President of the Economic and Social Council

In response to the invitation of the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1988/103, the Committee on Conferences met on 22 June 2005 to review the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings for 2006 and 2007 in the economic, social and related fields.[1] The Committee welcomed the opportunity to review the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings and to provide, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council.

In introducing the provisional calendar, the Secretary of the Committee drew the attention of the Committee to some important guidelines, also referred to in the preamble, which had been established by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in their resolutions and decisions on the calendar of conferences and meetings. Those guidelines included the Council's decision to biennialize the sessions of its subsidiary bodies. It was noted that a number of subsidiary bodies had yet to comply with the Council's decision on that matter. Moreover, the United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s had, in their follow-up, made specific recommendations for their review, generally in the subsidiary bodies of the Council, which included recommendations for an annual process. The Committee noted, however, that in paragraph 2 (f) (ii) of its resolution 1988/77, the Council had decided that it would continue to consider the biennialization of the sessions of its subsidiary bodies.

In the preparation of the calendar, careful consideration had been given to avoiding scheduling meetings on Orthodox Good Friday, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/208 A. Once the exact dates of Eid al Adha and Eid al Fitr became known, as with other official United Nations holidays, no official meeting would be scheduled for those days.

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* E/2005/100.
[1] E/2005/L.12.

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The Committee recalled that subsidiary bodies should end their sessions at least eight weeks before the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, to which they reported, and pointed out that every effort had been made in the preparation of the draft calendar to adhere to that guideline. It was also reiterated that every effort had been made to avoid any overlap of meetings related to the same sector of activity.

The Committee also noted that, once its mandate had been renewed by the Council, the next session of the United Nations Forum on Forests would be included in the calendar.

The Committee encouraged the Council to review the calendar as a whole in the context of its review of the mandates, composition, functions and working methods of its functional commissions and expert groups.

The Committee recommended the adoption of the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings for 2006 and 2007 in the economic, social and related fields, and recommended that the Council bear in mind the above observations/suggestions.

In closing, I would like to express the appreciation of the Committee for the invitation of the Council to review its draft calendar of conferences and meetings and for the continued close cooperation between the Council and the Committee.

(*Signed*) Diego **Simancas**